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PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1996-1997

THE SITUATION IN CENTRAL AMERICA: PROCEDURES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A FIRM AND LASTING PEACE AND PROGRESS IN FASHIONING A REGION OF PEACE, FREEDOM DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT

United Nations Office of Verification in El Salvador

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/50/L.72

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

A. Requests contained in the draft resolution

1. Under the terms of operative paragraphs 4, 5 and 6 of draft resolution A/50/L.72, the General Assembly would:

(a) Decide, in accordance with the recommendation contained in paragraph 36 of the report of the Secretary-General of 23 April 1996 (A/50/935), to establish a small United Nations Office of Verification, to be headed by an official at an appropriate political level, to follow up implementation of pending aspects of the peace accords in El Salvador through 31 December 1996;

(b) Also decide that the United Nations Office of Verification should be financed within existing resources, in a manner consistent with the effective fulfilment of its mandate and taking into account that the Secretary-General would submit proposals on possible means of absorption in the programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997 to the General Assembly, through the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, no later than 15 May 1996;

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(c) Note that regular visits to El Salvador by senior officials from United Nations Headquarters were making a significant contribution towards the full implementation of the peace accords.

B. Activities by which the proposed requests would be implemented

2. Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/50/L.72, the Secretary-General would establish a small United Nations Office of Verification, to be headed by an official at the D-2 level, for the period from 1 May to 31 December 1996. Its task would be to follow up implementation of pending agreements in El Salvador. The Office would continue to work with the Government and other parties to the peace agreements on matters of verification and good offices; support the Secretary-General's Envoy in his exercise of verification and good offices and report directly to the Department of Political Affairs in New York. In order to cooperate further with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the technical assistance aspects of implementation, the Office would count on UNDP for logistical and administrative support.

3. As indicated in the report of the Secretary-General (A/50/935), the Organization's further good offices would, at a minimum, be required in the public security sector; the process of constitutional and legislative reform; the land transfer programme; and the transfer of the rural human settlements.

4. The approved staffing of the Mission of the United Nations in El Salvador (MINUSAL) consisted of 11 international staff (1 D-2, 1 P-5, 8 P-4 and 1 General Service) and 4 civilian police, supported by 15 staff at the local level. Consistent with the expressed wish of the General Assembly (resolution 50/7 of 31 October 1995, para. 4), during the current mandate period of MINUSAL, its staffing has been reduced to eight Professionals and three civilian police. The proposed staffing of the United Nations Office of Verification would consist of 7 international staff, 6 Professionals (1 D-2, 1 P-5 and 4 P-4) and 1 General Service staff; and 3 civilian police, to be supported by 11 staff at the local level.

C. Indication of additional requirements

5. Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/50/L.72, the requirements for the United Nations Office of Verification for the period from 1 May to 31 December 1996 are estimated at $1,130,500. These costs include 6 posts for Professionals (1 D-2, 1 P-5 and 4 P-4), 1 General Service, 11 local level staff and 3 civilian police.

6. The D-2 post would be used for the Secretary-General's Representative in El Salvador and Head of the Office. The P-5 post would supervise teams in verification, good offices and coordination of technical assistance; manage day-to-day relations of an administrative, security and logistical nature with UNDP; establish and supervise security arrangements; maintain protocol arrangement with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and oversee the smooth functioning of the Office in accordance with the directives of the Envoy of the Secretary-General

and the Department of Political Affairs. Four posts at the P-4 level would be required to follow up on implementation of pending peace agreements in El Salvador: three Political Affairs Officers and one Legal Officer. Their functions are as indicated below.

(a) One P-4 Political Affairs Officer would follow up on all issues subject to verification on human settlements; and carry out verification functions on land, public security, administration of justice and reinsertion at the regional level. The Officer would also maintain daily contacts and work closely with the parties and relevant institutions concerned;

(b) One Political Affairs Officer would be assigned to follow up on implementation of land transfer and the transfer programme. The Officer would report and advise on measures to facilitate implementation at the field level, in particular regarding the decentralized execution of the land transfer programme; and chair various working groups and trilateral meetings;

(c) One Political Affairs Officer would follow up on the implementation of constitutional and legislative reform and of human rights issues; carry out verification and work closely with relevant institutions such as the National Counsel for the Defence of Human Rights. The Officer would also be responsible for assessing and apprising the Representative of the Secretary-General on the political situation;

(d) The Legal Officer would follow up on the implementation of public security issues and provide legal counsel on all issues; carry out verification functions; and maintain close contact with parties, the National Civilian Police and the National Academy for Public Security. The Officer would report and advise on measures required to ensure compliance with commitments related to public security.

7. The estimated requirements are summarize in the table below. Details are contained in the annex to the present document.

(In thousands of United States dollars)

	1996
Civilian police	61.0
Salaries and common staff costs	651.2
Mission subsistence allowance	116.7
Travel of staff	8.4
Consultants	33.6
Rental and maintenance of premises	75.8
Transport operations	28.3
Communications	30.8
Miscellaneous services and supplies	116.5
Freight	8.2
Total	1 130.5

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D. Contingency fund

8. As the activities relating to the United Nations Office of Verification are of an extraordinary nature relating to the maintenance of peace and security, they should continue to be dealt with outside the procedures related to the contingency fund, as provided for in paragraph 11 of annex I to General Assembly resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986.

E. Potential for absorption

9. In operative paragraph 5 of draft resolution A/50/L.72, the General Assembly would establish a United Nations Office of Verification to be financed from "within existing resources". In approving the programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997, the General Assembly, in its resolution 50/215 A of 23 December 1995, recognized that expenditures represented a total of $2,712,265,200, but it appropriated only $2,608,274,000. It decided that anticipated reductions of $103,992,000 would be achieved in the biennium. As indicated in the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/50/57), the level of appropriations finally approved for 1996-1997 involved $154 million of cost reductions, beyond the $98 million already included in the Secretary-General's programme budget submission.

10. The Secretary-General is still continuing in his attempts to identify the significant reductions required to meet the decision of the General Assembly. The requirements make it impossible for the Secretary-General to absorb additional expenditures without affecting existing mandated programmes and activities. Notwithstanding operative paragraph 5 of draft resolution A/50/L.72, additional programme demands, not foreseen at the time of the approval of the programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997, cannot be met from within existing resources.

F. Action required of the General Assembly

11. Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/50/L.72, the Secretary-General would find it impossible to implement the mandate and absorb the expenditures without affecting, at the same time, existing programmes and activities. Only if the Assembly were to decide, within the framework of resolution 50/214 (sect. II, para. 4), that existing programmes should be curtailed, postponed or terminated would it be possible to implement the mandate "within existing resources". In the absence of a decision of the Assembly in that regard, and consistent with the budgetary procedures embodied in Assembly resolution 41/213, an additional appropriation would be required. This would amount to $1,130,500 under section 3 of the programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997 for the continuation of a United Nations political presence in El Salvador during the period from 1 May to 31 December 1996. An additional appropriation of $135,900 would also be required under section 32 (Staff assessment) offset by the same amount under income section 1 (Income from staff assessment).

ANNEX

United Nations Office of Verification in El Salvador

Supplementary information on cost estimates for the period from 1 May to 31 December 1996

(In thousands of United States dollars)

	Estimated requirements, 1996
A. Personnel costs	
1. Civilian police	61.0
The estimates relate to monthly mission allowance of three civilian police for eight months ($49,000) and travel to and from El Salvador ($12,000)	
2. Salaries and common staff costs	651.2
This provision would cover salaries and common staff costs of seven international staff (one D-2, one P-5, four P-4 and one General Service) and 11 local level posts. The posts at the local level would provide for administrative assistants, computer operator, receptionist, crypto operator, secretaries and general purpose clerk.	
3. Mission subsistence allowance	116.7
It is assumed that the international staff from MINUSAL would be retained for the requirements of the new Office. The monthly mission allowance is based, therefore, on daily rates of $68 per day for the seven international staff calculated for the eight-month period.	
4. Travel of staff	8.4
Provisions under this heading relate to regular visits to El Salvador by a high-level Envoy of the Secretary-General. It is estimated that during the mandate period, four visits would be made at an estimated cost of $1,100 per trip ($4,400). Provisions are also made for two consultation visits to Headquarters ($4,000).	

	Estimated requirements, 1996
5. Consultants	33.6

Provisions are also made for one international consultant for a period of one and one half months to provide expert knowledge for the implementation of the programme of the National Council for Public Security, and in legislative reform and the administration of justice; and to review and advise on the related technical assistance programmes. The estimates are based on a monthly cost of $5,000 per consultant ($7,500); travel, estimated at $4,000; and monthly subsistence allowance for 35 days ($2,900). The services of two locally recruited consultants are included, at an estimated cost of $1,200 per month for eight months ($19,200). The consultants will assist in the compilation of a weekly "information letter" on progress in the various aspects of implementation of the peace accords and the analysis and cross-checking of data related to the land transfer programme.

Total, personnel costs	870.9

B. Operational costs

6. Rental and maintenance of premises	75.8

Provisions under this heading relate to rented premises of the Office's headquarters in El Salvador at an estimated cost of $5,500 per month for eight months ($44,000); supplies to maintain premises, estimated at $450 per month ($3,600); miscellaneous maintenance service at $2,700 per month ($21,600); and utilities, estimated at 15 per cent of the cost of rented premises ($6,600).

7. Transport operations	28.3

Provisions are made for the maintenance of vehicles ($16,000), already in the area; petrol, oil and lubricants ($9,600); fuel for generators ($400); and third-party liability insurance ($2,300).

Based on actual operation of the Mission, monthly rates are estimated at $2,000 for the maintenance of vehicles, $1,200 for petrol, oil and lubricants, $50 per month for standby generators ($400), and $400 for third-party liability insurance, $250 for world wide and $135 for local prorated insurance during the eight-month period ($2,300). The vehicles in El Salvador are

	Estimated requirements, 1996
ex-United Nations Observer Group in El Salvador (ONUCA) and ex-United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL) vehicles that have reached their life expectancy and were scheduled for write-off.	
8. Communications	30.8
Provision is made for user charges for commercial communications such as facsimile, telephone and cryptograph, at an average cost of $3,300 per month for eight months. Spare parts and services are estimated at $4,400 for the same period.	
9. Miscellaneous services and supplies	116.5
The estimates relating to miscellaneous services ($100,500) relate to part-time services required for processing technical data on verification within the public security sector, constitutional and legislative reform, land transfer and transfer of rural human settlements and all aspects of the Office's activities, estimated at $2,210 per month ($17,700); official hospitality for reception and official functions for members of delegations, government officials and dignitaries, estimated at $500 per month ($4,000); provision of the coordination of seminars on land reform, national policy, security and the judicial system, at an average monthly cost of $250 ($2,000); security services, at a monthly cost of $3,400 ($27,200); maintenance of office furniture and equipment at a monthly cost of $300 ($2,400); other miscellaneous maintenance services, estimated at $1,000 per month ($8,000); and reimbursement to UNDP for administrative services it renders to the Office on all matters dealing with financial, logistics and other administrative aspects of the Office, estimated at $4,900 per month ($39,200).	
The cost of miscellaneous supplies is estimated at $16,000 for the eight-month period. These would cover stationery and office supplies at a monthly rate of $500 ($4,000); sanitation and cleaning materials estimated at $200 per month ($1,600); subscriptions to international and local newspapers and technical communications publications, estimated at $450 per month ($3,600); other miscellaneous supplies, estimated at $250 per month ($2,000); and the production of radio and television news programmes, printed materials and photo coverage, estimated at $600 per month ($4,800).	

	Estimated requirements, 1996
10. Freight	8.2
Provision is made for the shipment of surplus office furniture and equipment to other missions upon closure of the Office.	
Total, operational costs	259.6
Grand total	1 130.5